

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE

A Final Environmental Impact Report (Final EIR) has been prepared for the consideration of a new lease by the California State Lands Commission (CSLC) for pipeline river crossings at the Mokelumne and Cosumnes Rivers for the PG&E Line 108 Natural Gas Pipeline Project. The Final EIR consists of the November 2007 Draft EIR, comments received during the 45-day public comment period, responses to those comments, and changes to the text of the Draft EIR. Note that the Final EIR references and incorporates the Draft EIR. The Draft EIR may be viewed electronically, in Word or Acrobat format, on the CSLC internet website at <http://www.slc.ca.gov>.

The Final EIR has been prepared pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (the CEQA) (section 21000 et seq., California Public Resources Code) and in accordance with the *Guidelines for the Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act* (section 15000 et seq., California Code of Regulations, Tit. 14). The *Guidelines* stipulate that an EIR must be prepared for any project that may have a significant impact on the environment. The PG&E Line 108 Natural Gas Pipeline Project is a “project” as defined by the *Guidelines*. Upon preliminary review, the CSLC determined that the PG&E Line 108 Natural Gas Pipeline Project may have a significant adverse impact on the environment and, therefore, an EIR is required.

The CSLC, as the Lead Agency for this proposal, is required by section 15089 of the CEQA to prepare a Final EIR. The Final EIR will be used by the CSLC as part of its approval process, including setting the conditions of the lease agreement, and incorporating mitigation measures for project implementation. A Mitigation Monitoring Program inclusive of revisions following the publication of the Draft EIR is attached to this Final EIR as Appendix A.

1.2 CONTENTS OF THE FINAL EIR

As required by section 15132 of the *Guidelines*, the Final EIR consists of the following elements:

- The Draft EIR or a revision of the draft;
- A list of persons, organizations, and public agencies commenting on the Draft EIR (see Section 2);
- Comments and recommendations received on the Draft EIR (see Section 3);

- Responses to significant environmental points raised in the review and consultation process (see Section 3); and

- Revisions to the Draft EIR (see Section 4 and Appendix A).

Additional information is also provided, including a description of the public hearing (Section 2).

1.3 DECISION MAKING PROCESS

The CSLC is the Lead Agency for this Final EIR because the Commission has jurisdiction over the Mokelumne and Cosumnes Rivers that would be crossed by the PG&E Line 108 Natural Gas Pipeline Project. The CSLC will use the Final EIR in its decision-making process in determining whether or not to issue a lease of State lands for construction and operation of the proposed Project. The CSLC must certify that:

- The Final EIR has been completed in compliance with the CEQA;
- The Final EIR was presented to the CSLC in a public meeting and the CSLC reviewed and considered the information contained in the Final EIR prior to considering the proposed Project; and
- The Final EIR reflects the CSLC's independent judgment and analysis (*Guidelines* section 15090).

In conjunction with certification of the Final EIR, the CSLC must prepare one or more written findings of fact for each significant environmental impact identified in the document. These findings must either state that:

- The Project has been changed (including adoption of mitigation measures) to avoid or substantially reduce the magnitude of the impact;
- Changes to the Project are within another agency's jurisdiction and have been or should be adopted; or
- Specific considerations make mitigation measures or alternatives infeasible.

If any of the impacts identified in the EIR cannot be reduced to a level that is less than significant, the CSLC may issue a Statement of Overriding Considerations for approval of the project if specific social, economic, or other factors justify a project's unavoidable adverse environmental effects. If the CSLC decides to approve a project for which a Final EIR has been prepared, the CSLC will issue a Notice of Determination.